

# Music as Taught and Practiced in City's Colleges

## Music Holds Important Place In the Colleges of New York

Teaching of Appreciation Is Their Special Field; Many Theoretical Courses Are Offered; Orchestras and Choruses

By F. D. Perkins

Music, both in regard to its teaching and its performance, is a subject of some importance in the colleges of New York. While they cannot, of course, and do not claim to rival institutions existing primarily for the teaching of music, they offer considerable instruction, especially from the standpoint of theory, for those intending to become trained musicians or composers; while their most significant activity, and one which may be considered as their special field, is in the opportunities they offer for students who do not necessarily play some instrument or intend to pursue a musical career, but who wish to cultivate an intelligent interest and enjoyment for the best music. For such a purpose Columbia University, New York University, City College and Hunter College all offer courses in musical appreciation, and such courses invariably have proved to be the best attended of all those given by the various music departments. While they vary in number, length and the extent of the field covered, their general scheme consists of lectures on the history and development of music in its various forms, with emphasis, as a rule, on the symphonic. In some cases students are expected to attend a number of concerts and give a written discussion of what they have heard, with the aim of substituting an active, intelligent understanding for the proverbial "drowsy reverie relieved with nervous thrills" of Mr. Santayana.

### Musical Appreciation

This subject is emphasized at Columbia, where Professor Daniel

Prof. Henry T. Fleck



Director of Music at Hunter College

Gregory Mason, the head of the department of music, has pointed out the unique value of music as a recreation, in the true sense of the word, especially in our present largely industrial, highly specialized way of living, and the host of misconceptions that hinder its enjoyment. Three courses are offered at Columbia under Professor Mason: the elementary and larger course, Music 1-2, takes the history of music from Palestrina to the death of Beethoven, with the intention of giving the student a general view of classical music "suited to the needs of those who desire an understanding of music as a part of liberal culture," even if he has had no previous acquaintance with music. It leads to Music 3-4, which continues the history of music through the nineteenth century to the present, and to a certain extent, discusses the important works on the various local orchestral programs. Those going further into the subject can continue with a course in symphonic analysis, dealing with modern symphonic works since Beethoven, which calls for individual and a final thesis from each student. Another course in the history of music is given in the university extension department under Professor Jean S. Beck, which covers a wider field, discussing the its forms, both instrumental and vocal, from the earliest times to the present. At Teachers College a special course in appreciation entitled "Musical Art" is given under Professor Charles H. Farnsworth, which discusses the relation of art in general and music in particular to everyday living, and makes a study of conditions favoring the better enjoyment of origin and development of music in all music.

A year's course in musical appreciation is given at New York University by Professor William Lyndon Wright, who has charge of the musical activities on University Heights. It includes lectures on the historical and formal aspect of music, with study of and illustrations from the works of the greater composers and occasional class reports. A similar course is given for the other half of the university near Washington Square by Lawrence C. Jones. The courses at the City College of New York, under Professor Samuel A. Baldwin, follow similar lines. Here there are two parallel courses, both called "History and Appreciation of Music," one for matriculated and one for extension students in the School of Education, beginning with primitive music and the music of

the early Christian Church and ending with national schools of composition and American composers (Music 11 and 111). Music 11 leads to Music 12, also under Professor Baldwin, entitled "A Study of Modern Music." It consists of a detailed study of composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of various phases of instrumental music and the development of the music-drama, calling for a thesis from each student on some assigned phase of the course. The elementary and advanced courses are given in the day session for matriculated students every year, but alternate in the extension department, Music 111 being given this year and 112, "Masterpieces of Music," in the next, and so on. About sixty students have enrolled for Music

Professor Daniel G. Mason



Director of Music of Columbia College

11, while Professor Baldwin calculates that about 60 per cent of the graduates of City College have taken some course in musical appreciation.

Hunter College also has its course on the History of Music, along the same general lines as those of the other colleges, but its distinctive feature is the two-year series of courses on the opera, numbered 31 to 34, under Professor Henry T. Fleck. Here the standard opera are explained and illustrated on the piano and by phonograph records of well-known singers, aided by

Prof. William L. Wright



Director of Music, New York University

a large supply of opera scores for the use of the students. Beginning with the simpler operas, the course reaches the "Ring" and the other Wagner operas in the latter part of the second year.

Theoretical Courses Besides such purely cultural courses the four colleges offer courses in harmony and other phases of musical theory. Columbia has a thorough series of theoretical courses, mostly under Seth Bingham, a graduate of Yale, who gives Music 7-8, Elementary Harmony, duplicated in the University Extension department, which leads either to the college course in counterpoint, 11-12, or the extension course in advanced harmony. Students of counterpoint can go on to Mr. Bingham's course in musical form and orchestra-

tion, in which are studied the principles of composition in the larger forms. Mr. Bingham holds the Yale degree of Bachelor of Music and has had compositions performed by the Chicago and Boston orchestras and by the Barren Ensemble.

About twenty students are taking Music 7-8 this year, with, of course, a diminishing number as the courses advance. Teachers College has separate courses of its own given by Frederick S. Andrews, a graduate of the Institute of Musical Art: the preliminary "Tone Thinking and Melodic Dictation" leading to "Introductory Harmony and Harmonic Dictation," "Applied Harmony and Advanced Harmonic Dictation" which introduce composition in the smaller forms, and finally "Applied Counterpoint and Free Composition."

At New York University Professor Wright holds classes in elementary and advanced harmony and ear training, and makes the interesting point that most of the students who have elected music are honors and Phi Beta Kappa men. Two successive courses in harmony, advanced harmony and counterpoint are also given at City College by Professor Baldwin, while three theoretical courses are offered in the extension department. Hunter College offers a wide choice: three years of theory, two of "practical" harmony as distinct from theory, with courses of equal extent in counterpoint, composition and orchestration. Those who are not specializing in music can take a shorter course in theory and harmony leading to two successive advanced courses.

### Teaching the Teachers

The teaching of actual vocal or instrumental performance, the natural province of the individual music teacher, music school or conservatory, is of less importance in the college music course, except where it has a connection with student activities in the various choral associations and college orchestras. The Columbia student, however, can study the violin or ensemble playing in chamber music with credit toward his degree if he is taking a theoretical music course at the same time, or he can learn the organ or train his voice. All kinds of technical courses can be taken at Teachers College, voice, piano, organ, violin or violoncello, for instance, but here the intention is to train professional musicians or music teachers, especially for public schools. Three programs are outlined for such students, in music, technical, theoretical and appreciative courses, leading to the regular Bachelor of Science degree; in teaching of school music and in supervision, which require further courses in music teaching, and in the practice and psychology of education, bringing the same degree with a special diploma.

According to Professor Farnsworth, the head of the college's music department, many of the courses in musical pedagogy are taken by experienced teachers from various parts of the country who wish to keep in touch with the latest methods.

Opportunities for independent graduate study under some supervision are offered at Columbia itself in the form of scholarships. The Moseenthal Fellowship, established to aid promising students of composition, men or women, gives the holder the income of \$7,300 for two years to study music, either in Columbia abroad. Those who apply are expected to show a thorough knowledge of harmony and counterpoint and submit some original compositions for full orchestra. Similar conditions are attached to the Pulitzer Traveling Scholarship of \$15,000, which requires the submission of compositions in the larger forms of chamber, orchestral or choral music and presupposes the willingness of the holder to spend a year in Europe. The Cutting Traveling Fellowship, of about \$1,000, is awarded by the trustees to graduate students of at least one year's standing who show promise, prescribing travel and study under their direction either in this country or abroad, while the Clarence Barker Musical Scholarship gives the scholar, selected by the university council on the recommendation of the department of music the income for two years of \$25,000 to study, preferably in Europe, under the department's direction. A graduate student can study for the Master of Arts degree with music as the major interest, for which, among other requirements, he must pursue the courses in musical form and orchestration and symphonic analysis, and submit either a thesis or an original composition of large form for orchestra, or both.

Both of the colleges conducted by the city offer courses of training for teachers of music in the public schools, such as methods of teaching music, methods in ear training, sight singing

and its teaching problems, the teaching of music in elementary schools and the teaching of music appreciation in the earlier school grades at City College, two special teachers' courses and one in music teaching in secondary schools at Hunter.

### Student Activities

Student musical activities are, naturally, somewhat hampered by the fact that so many of the students, especially in the colleges supported by the city, live at home and attend the institutions purely for study rather than for "college life." As a result the number available for the various student musical associations is much smaller than the enrollment figures would indicate. Still, the department of music at City College conducts a glee club, with the object of developing choral singing in the college, including instruction in the rudiments of vocal production, and also an orchestra composed partly of college students and partly of music students not belonging to the college, in order, it is explained, to secure instruments which the former cannot supply.

In New York University Professor Wright has a class in choral singing, including instruction in voice production and sight reading and ensemble work as far as numbers permit. Incidentally every student is supposed to take his turn at conducting the others. Twelve picked students form the university choir, supplemented by twelve more volunteers, singing at the chapel services on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, reinforced by outside soloists for the occasional special concerts given for members of the college. The students maintain a glee club and an instrumental club, which travel together on short tours, while the glee club is a contestant in the annual intercollegiate contest at Carnegie Hall. There is also the New York University Choral Society of about sixty members, trained and conducted by Professor Wright, which generally gives two concerts a year, a program of Christmas music in December and a song recital in February, and conducts other concerts with outside reinforcement.

The singing at Columbia is under Professor Walter Henry Hall, who gives a special course on the interpretation of choral music: church music, choir training and choral conducting. The university has two chapel choirs under his direction, one of twenty-two students for the weekday services, and a specially trained choir for the Sunday afternoon programs. For this, twenty carefully selected women students give their services, which are rewarded by a \$50 rebate in their tuition fees, while the men of the choir are professional singers.

The Columbia Glee Club is composed of about seventy-five picked men, supervised by Professor Hall. It has adopted the policy first taken up by the Harvard Glee Club about three years ago, of singing the best choral music instead of the traditional limited collection of time-honored airs which are supposed to delight the soul of the traditional graduate, becoming, in a way, a highly-trained secular choir rather than an organization existing to infuse glee into mass meetings, smokers and reunions. At present the club gives an annual public concert in a downtown hall (it was the Town Hall last season), and also competes in the Intercollegiate Glee Club contest. Its development along the lines planned will naturally take some time, and Professor Hall does not necessarily expect to accomplish as much as could be done in a college with a larger proportion of resident students, where more time could be devoted in the absence of outside interests. The beginning, however, is promising.

Distinct from the Glee Club is the University Chorus, composed both of students and of musical people not members of the university, meeting under Professor Hall for ninety minutes every Tuesday evening. It gives an annual concert of its own and two or three public concerts with the Brooklyn Oratorio Society. Professor Hall, who directs both organizations, hopes to give parts of Brahms's German Requiem, a Bach cantata and the Baal Chorus from "Elijah" during the present season. For instrumental players there is the university orchestra, which also admits qualified players

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from outside the university, directed by Herbert Dittler, a violinist and pupil of Jacques Thibaud. Occasional concerts are given for university members with programs of the simpler classics, such as Haydn symphonies and "popular classic" numbers of the type of "Peer Gynt." Work in the chorus or orchestra can be counted toward a degree by students taking other music courses. Student musicians can also join the brass band, officially called the "Columbia University Student Band," which is open to all wind instrument players of sufficient proficiency who wish to acquire practical routine and experience. The band rehearses every Tuesday evening under Edwin Franko Goldman, and expects to give concerts at the university as soon as its progress is considered sufficient. Less formally members of the faculty and students throughout the university who are expert pianists or players of

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